

Part:

2

A snapshot



Te panoni i te hangarua Transforming recycling

Te whakapiki i te hangarua paeara ā-kāinga Improvements to household kerbside recycling



Ministry for the
Environment
Manatū Mō Te Taiao



Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

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We all want to do the right thing

Recycling rates in Aotearoa New Zealand are low compared to other countries with better systems, and we have too much litter in our environment.

- ▶ Large amounts of recyclable materials are lost to landfill. This results in lost resources and business opportunities.
- ▶ We want to reduce waste, litter, and emissions and increase resource recovery and the recycling of materials into new products. Importantly, it needs to be easy for people and businesses to do the right thing.
- ▶ We need to transform our systems to build a more circular future where everyone reduces waste, reuses products, and recycles the resources they use.

Many countries have already gone on this journey, and so we have great examples to learn from. That's why we're proposing to put the right foundations in place to bring our recycling systems up to global standards, lift the performance of Aotearoa New Zealand's recycling, and build a low-emissions, low-waste economy.

Have your say on our proposals to make recycling easier and better

We are consulting on three proposals related to transforming recycling in New Zealand:



These three proposals are part of a longer-term shift toward a circular economy, where packaging is made of materials that maintain their value, are easy to recycle sustainably and have a low impact on the environment.

The consultation will run from 13 March to 22 May 2022.

This snapshot gives an overview of Part 2: Proposal to improve household kerbside recycling.
For more detail, please refer to the [full consultation document](#).

New Zealand's kerbside recycling and food scraps collections are underperforming

Kerbside recycling and food scraps collections are the main way households divert waste from landfill, returning resources to the economy and reducing climate emissions from our waste.

Our recycling collections could perform better. Only a third of household materials placed at kerbside are collected for recycling, with the rest placed in the rubbish.

What is accepted in recycling collections varies across the country, causing confusion.

Food scraps in landfills are changing our climate. More than 300,000 tonnes of food scraps are sent to New Zealand landfills every year, rotting and producing methane, a potent greenhouse gas. Food scraps are estimated to contribute 22 per cent of New Zealand's emissions from landfills.

The proposals below aim to increase the quality and quantity of materials collected for recycling, reducing climate emissions, recycling resources through our economy and returning nutrients to our soil.

Have your say on transforming recycling in Aotearoa New Zealand

We are consulting on two core proposals, supported by four additional proposals, to make it easier for people to recycle at home. We are seeking feedback on the proposals and what they would mean for your household.

Core proposals:

1. **Collect a standard set of materials in household kerbside recycling across New Zealand.** To reduce confusion and improve the quality and quantity of collected recycling.
2. **Provide urban households with food scraps collections.** To reduce climate emissions and recycle nutrients back to the soil.

Supporting proposals:

3. Require reporting for both council and private-sector household kerbside collections.
4. Set councils a minimum baseline performance and a high achieving target for household kerbside diversion.
5. Consider requiring the separation of glass or cardboard and paper.
6. Require all councils to provide a kerbside dry recycling collection to urban households.

The consultation document [Transforming recycling](#) provides more details about the supporting proposals.

What materials will be collected at kerbside?

We are interested in whether you think these materials are the right ones to collect in household kerbside recycling across the country.

Proposed materials for kerbside collection:



Glass bottles and jars



Paper and cardboard



Plastic bottles and containers
1, 2, and 5



Aluminium and steel tins and cans

When selecting these materials we considered:

- ▶ whether the material has sustainable end markets
- ▶ how many councils already collect the material (to minimise disruption)
- ▶ whether efficient sorting technology is available
- ▶ whether both manual and automated recycling sorting facilities can process the material.

Ka whakamāmā ake mātou i te ara mā te tangata ki te mahi hangarau tika.

We are going to make it simpler and easier for people to recycle right.

What is a food scraps collection?

All households produce food scraps of some kind, such as rotten fruit, leftovers, onion skins and old bread. Some households compost food scraps but many cannot or choose not to.

A kerbside food scraps collection works much like a recycling collection: households set aside their scraps and each day empty them into a 23-litre bin stored outside.

Once a week the bin is placed at kerbside for collection, usually at the same time as your recycling and rubbish collections.

The collected food scraps are processed into compost or anaerobically digested. These processes return the nutrients back to the soil to grow more food, closing the loop on our food system. Keeping food scraps out of landfill also reduces our emissions.



Photo credit: Auckland Council

Why are we proposing these changes?

A transformed recycling system in New Zealand will increase the quality and quantity of materials collected for recycling, reduce emissions, and recycle more resources through our economy and nutrients back into our soil.

Proposal	Why?
1 Collect only a standard set of materials in kerbside recycling and food scrap collections	To ensure the same items can be recycled right around the country. This will reduce confusion and allow consistent national messages about recycling. The aim is to increase the amount recycled and decrease the number of incorrect items placed in recycling. It will also allow businesses to design packaging that can be recycled right around the country and provide quality resources and scale to the local recycling sector.
2 All councils provide a kerbside food scraps collection to urban households*	The more households that have access to food scraps collections, the easier it is to divert food scraps from landfill, reducing emissions and recycling nutrients back to the soil.
3 Require reporting for both council and private kerbside collections	Reporting how much is collected allows us to track our progress towards increased recycling, lower emissions and a circular economy.
4 Set councils a minimum baseline performance and a high achieving target for kerbside diversion	To encourage more effective kerbside collections and ensure we are all playing our part to reduce emissions and wasted resources.
5 Consider collecting glass or cardboard and paper separately	Broken glass lowers the value, and can prevent the recycling of other materials, particularly paper and cardboard.
6 All councils provide a kerbside recycling collection to urban households*	To make it easier for all New Zealanders to help reduce emissions and wasted resources.

*households in towns with more than 1,000 residents.

Make your voice count

This consultation sets out issues and options for your feedback on how we tackle household recycling and food scraps and we invite you to share your ideas. Your feedback will help shape our final proposals.

We are also consulting on a [container return scheme](#) and the [separation of business food waste](#).

For full details on these proposals, the problems we are trying to solve and the options we have considered, please read the [full consultation document](#).

Help shape the way we recycle

Fill out the [short consultation survey](#).

You can fill out the long consultation survey through [Citizen Space](#), our consultation hub. PDF files should also be uploaded into Citizen Space. However, scanned documents cannot be submitted.

We request that you don't mail submissions as this makes analysis more difficult. However, if you need to, please send written submissions to *Transforming recycling*, Ministry for the Environment, PO Box 10362, Wellington 6143.

If you are emailing your feedback, send it to transformingrecycling@mfe.govt.nz. The question-and-answer format is still required for all long-form submissions, such as PDFs and essay-styled submissions. This makes it clearer which question is being answered.

Submissions close at 11.59pm, 22 May 2022.

What happens next

The Ministry will consider the proposals for transforming recycling in light of the comments we receive and engage with affected parties.

We aim to present final proposals to Cabinet for policy decisions in 2022. The proposals (container return scheme, improving household recycling and the separation of business food waste) have different implementation periods. You can find out more information and provide feedback on the implementation timeframes in the [full consultation submission form](#).

*Kōrero mai ō whakaaro kia whakatikaina
tā tātou mahi hangarua, whakamimiti para
hoki i Aotearoa!*

*Have your say to improve the way we recycle
and reduce rubbish and litter in Aotearoa
New Zealand!*

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